

Frederick and Lisette Ball House  
707 Lexington Avenue  
First Ward Neighborhood  
Altoona  
Blair County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5811

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FREDERICK AND LISETTE BALL HOUSE

HABS No. PA-5811

Location: 707 Lexington Avenue

Date of Erection: 1897

Architect: Beezer Brothers

Description: This two-and-a-half-story house, measuring 22' x 56', is brick-veneered wood frame. The side-gable roof has a large, striking cross gable over the two-story rounded bay. The cornice of the bay has classical swags and garlands in the frieze. There is a one-story porch across the front.

An 1897 photograph shows the house in its original condition. A small dormer on the front, now partially boarded up, originally had a round-arched pediment. There were small spires at the peak of the gable, as well as the corners of the house, and balustrades atop the projecting bay and first-story porch. Generally, though, the house is remarkably unchanged.

History: According to a catalog of the architects' work, the Beezer Brothers designed this house for Frederick Ball, a foreman for the PRR. In 1894 Lisette Ball acquired the property here and three years later her husband, Frederick, was taxed for a "new house." Frederick Ball was Irish-born of English parents; Lisette was Pennsylvania-born of German parents. They had five children. Lisette Ball died in 1904, and Frederick sold the house to John Schenk for \$7,000. Months later, Schenk sold it to Jennie Whitman for \$7,500. She moved in with her husband, Edward, who sold millinery and ladies' cloaks. He died within a few years and Jennie, a milliner, lived here until her death in 1940.

Sources: Maps: 1894, 1909. City directories. Tax assessment records. Deed books: 104/58, 148/322, 158/145, 515/102. U.S. Census, 1900. Beezer Brothers, 1897, 137.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. An overview of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and an overview of the first ward neighborhood (HABS No. PA-5788) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by HABS Senior Historian Alison K. Hoagland, project leader and editor, in the summer of 1989. Hoagland's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.